increase exports and decrease imports in the foreign trade ;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) whether any proposals for reduction in the import duties on software and leather inputs as required by exporters have been determined by Government ; and

(d) if so, what steps Government propose to take for appropriate action on the demand of certain exporters for the amendment of Section 88 HHC of Income Tax Act to get tax exemption on profits ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) Government have already taken several policy initiatives to increase exports and to facilitate export-linked imports, which include, *inter-alia* introduction of unitied exchange rate system, revision of Export-Import Policy 1992-97 with emphasis on simplification and streamlining of policy and procedures, reduction in import duties, increase in availability of credit at lower rates of interest stremgthening infrastructural facilities and improving quality through technological upgradation.

(c) and (d) Proposals regarding reduction import duties on crucial imports including software and leather inputs, as also modifications in Section 80 HHC of Income Tax Act suggested by exporters, are receiving the attention of the Government.

323. [*Transferred to 14th December,* 1993]

Setting up of Export Promotion Zones

324. SHRI P. UPENDRA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) how many export Promotion Zones have been set up in the country so far ;

(b) whether procedural and other delays are affecting the functioning of the Export Promotion Zones ; and

(c) if so, what steps are being taken by Governmet to remove the obstacles in the functioning of the Export Promotion Zones?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) 7 Export Processing Zones have been set up in the country so far.

(b) and (c) Even though growth of exports from the Zones have generally maintained a positive trend, Policy and Procedures regarding EPZs are under constant review. Some of the changes made in this regard include speedier approvals, simplification of the Policy framework, DTA access with reduced rates of duty and delegation of powers to Development Commissioners of EPZs.

325. [*Transferred to 14th December,* 1993]

Trade Potential between India and South Africa

326. SHRI SURESH KALMADI :

SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state ;

(a) whether it is a fact that South Africa has projected a trade level of 1 billion dollars with India in the near futcre ; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It is premature to make any assessment of India's trade with South Africa as sanctions on economic relations with South Africa have been lifted only in October, 1993.